

June 17, 2010

## **Water Quality Protection Division**



### **Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill, Gulf of Mexico Region 6 Update**

**Subject:**                   **Water Quality Division Update # 34**  
                                  **Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill, Gulf of Mexico**

**Date:**                       June 17, 2010

**Reporting Period:**   June 16, 2010 1300 – June 17, 2010 1300

## Forecast

- The nearshore oil forecast created by NOAA (Figure 1) indicates winds are forecast to be relatively weak (< 8 kts) and predominantly W/NW through Friday, then become SW on Saturday at 7-10 kts. Trajectories indicate continued movement of the slick to the east over the next few days. With the weak westerly and northwesterly winds forecast, coastal impacts are slightly reduced. However, oil already present nearshore may continue to come ashore and be brought into bays by tidal currents. Coastal regions between Dauphin Island, AL and Panama City, FL continue to be threatened by shoreline contacts within this forecast period.
- The offshore oil forecast created by NOAA (Figure 2) indicates recent satellite imagery analysis no longer shows the persistent patches of sheen to the S-SE of the main slick. However, scattered sheens and tar balls previously observed in these regions may have been entrained into the large clockwise eddy (Eddy Franklin) that has pinched off the main Loop Current (LC). Trajectories indicate that most of these sheens will continue to move clockwise in Eddy Franklin. Some oil may be getting entrained into a counterclockwise eddy to the NE of Eddy Franklin. The connection between the spill source and Eddy Franklin has been cut off due to a change in the currents. The oil will biodegrade and photo-oxidize over the time frame of weeks to months.

## Monitoring and Assessment

- Continuing to coordinate with the REOC Environmental Unit on the review of incoming water and sediment quality monitoring data, including results from water samples analyzed for dispersants and sediment toxicity testing results.
- Attending regular meetings and calls with Region 4, HQ, & REOC.

## Drinking Water

- Drinking water intakes, public drinking water wells, and domestic wells have not been impacted by the oil sheen and are not projected to be impacted.
- EPA Region 6 is providing the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH) daily situation report as well as data summaries as they become available.
- EPA Region 6 continues to coordinate closely with the LDHH on all drinking water issues.

## Data Management – Mapping Efforts

- Updated the Shoreline Coastal Assessment Team (SCAT) and spill trajectory data.

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## NPDES

- Continue to participate in discussions regarding options for addressing the moratorium on drilling as it impacts NPDES Permit GMG290000 (a conference call was held today, June 17, 2010).
- Participating in discussions on options for disposal/treatment/permitting of oil skimming decant water.
- NPDES Permits and TMDL Branch continues to be available to provide technical assistance as needed.

## Coastal Programs

### Louisiana Large-Scale Coastal Barrier Plan:

- Dredging and stockpiling material has begun, with two dredges working, one east and one west of the Mississippi River. No lab results are available yet for the material dredged from the River. Shaw Group's current best case estimate for constructing all six segments is 145 days and 18-20 million cubic yards of material but several assumptions have been questioned by the Corps and other agencies.
- Plans developed by an interagency working group (including EPA) were approved at the end of 2009 to address a shortage of capacity for the placement of dredged material from Corps of Engineers operations to maintain navigation depths in the upper reaches of Houston Ship Channel and the Bayport Ship Channel, Texas. Construction of new marsh and upland habitat placement areas was scheduled to begin next week, but the project is now on hold, pending a final decision by the Corps to reassign these dredges to the Louisiana sand berm project.

### Corps Emergency Authorizations for Coastal Protection Features:

- Coordination is ongoing with the Corps, OW, and Region 4 on a continuing series of emergency authorization requests for incremental work to install booms, sand bags, tiger dams, concrete blocks, rocks, dredges, and similar structures in the Chandeleur Sound, Barataria Bay, Terrebonne Bay, and adjoining waterways.

### OW Ecological Impact Analyses:

- Ongoing internal discussions regarding regulatory and technical aspects of various oil skimming and disposal scenarios.
- Discussions continue regarding the marsh protection and marsh remediation alternatives and techniques.

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- Ongoing coordination, through OW, with the Association of National Estuary Programs and NEP Directors regarding baseline characterization data, habitat and restoration priorities, and a request to OWOW to provide a bridge between the NRDA process and the NEPs.

#### Corps Navigation Maintenance Dredging:

- Continued coordination between OW, Region 4, and Region 6 regarding dredged material and ocean dumping sites potentially impacted by the oil spill.
- Maintenance of the Houston Ship Channel for commercial navigation may be effected by the reassignment of dredges to the LA sand berm project (see above).
- Navigation interests from Mobile to Lake Charles have raised concerns to the Corps about potential adverse impacts to navigation if dredges are redirected to the LA sand berm project. The Corps is considering redirecting two dredges from Mississippi River maintenance to work on the sand berm project and the Corps dredge, Wheeler, is expected to be repaired and dedicated to the berm project this week
- The Corps is employing oil detection kits on the dredges, a technique coordinated with EPA and Corps research facilities during the 2008 Mississippi River oil spill. In addition, new ship decontamination sites have been established in the lower Mississippi River and Southwest Pass which may be within the area of influence of the EPA-designated ocean disposal site.
- Discussions are underway regarding marsh remediation efforts and initial agency coordination is occurring regarding monitoring the long-term landscape-scale coastal habitat impacts.

#### Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA)

- Based upon the shoreline impact assessment map (Figure 3) and the EPA OSC shoreline cleanup efforts (Table 1), there have been no changes to the list of CWPPRA projects in the vicinity of oil impacted areas since 6/10/10.

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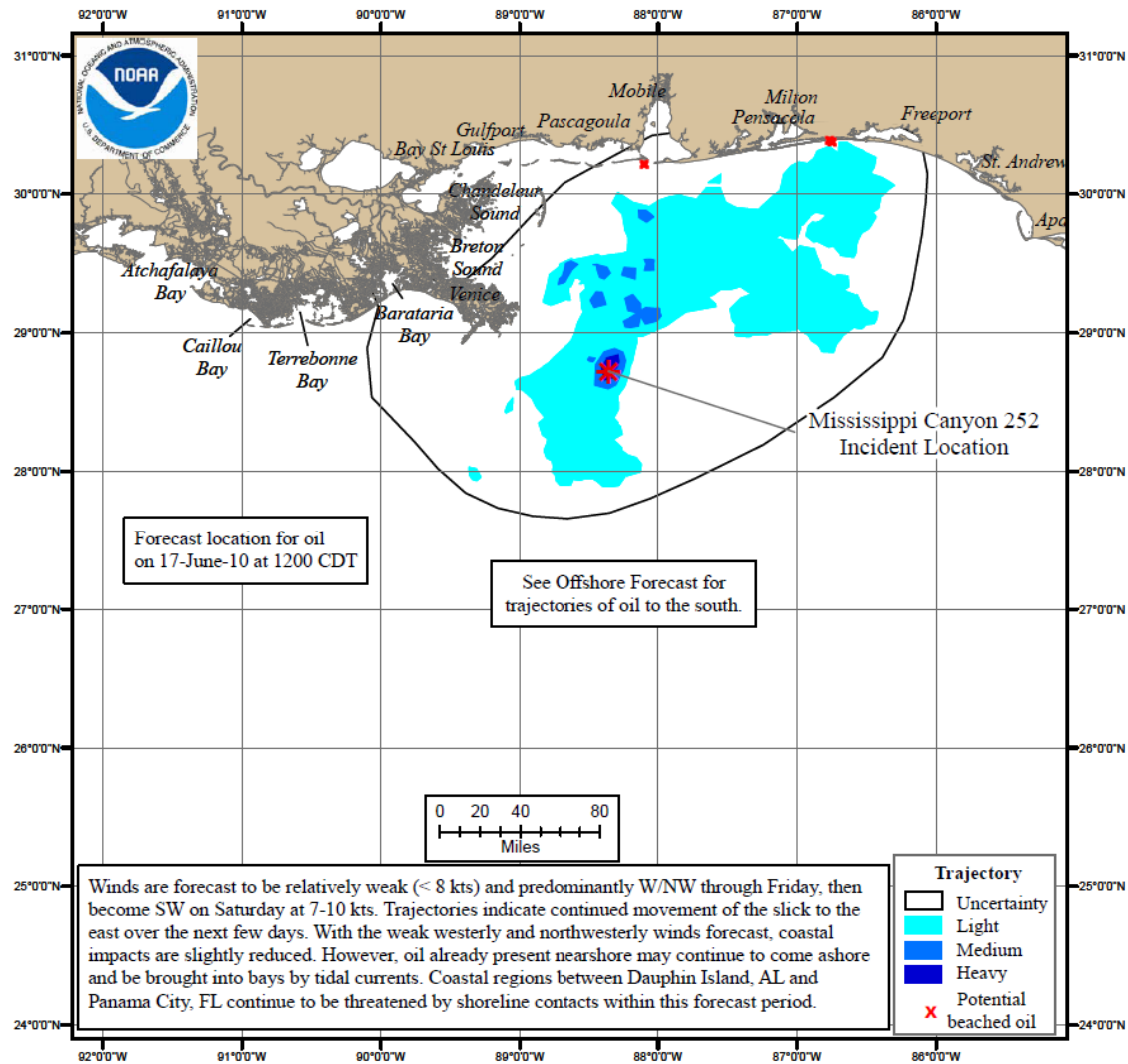


Figure 1. NOAA nearshore oil slick trajectory forecast for 6/16/10

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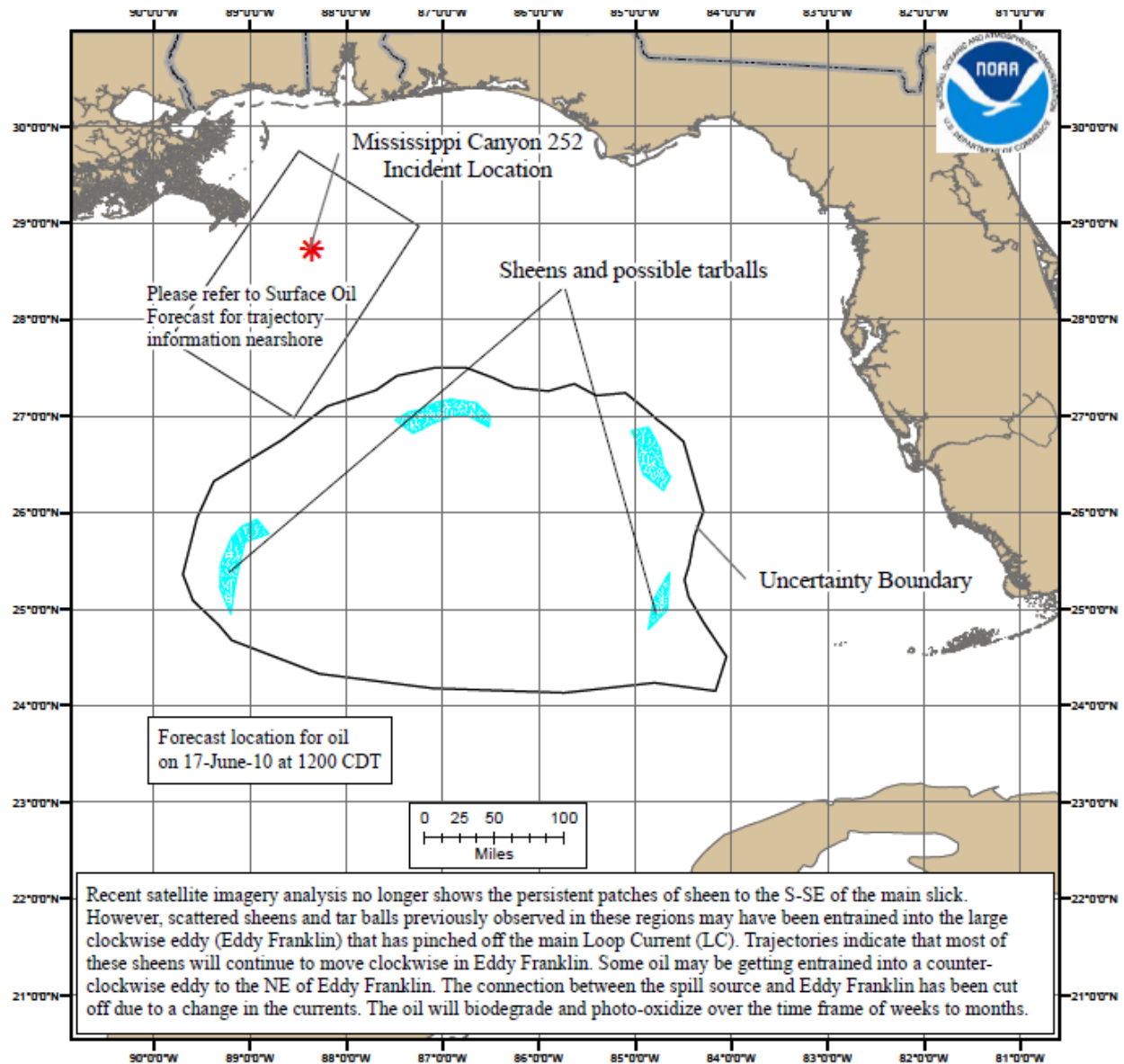


Figure 2. NOAA offshore oil slick trajectory forecast for 6/16/10.

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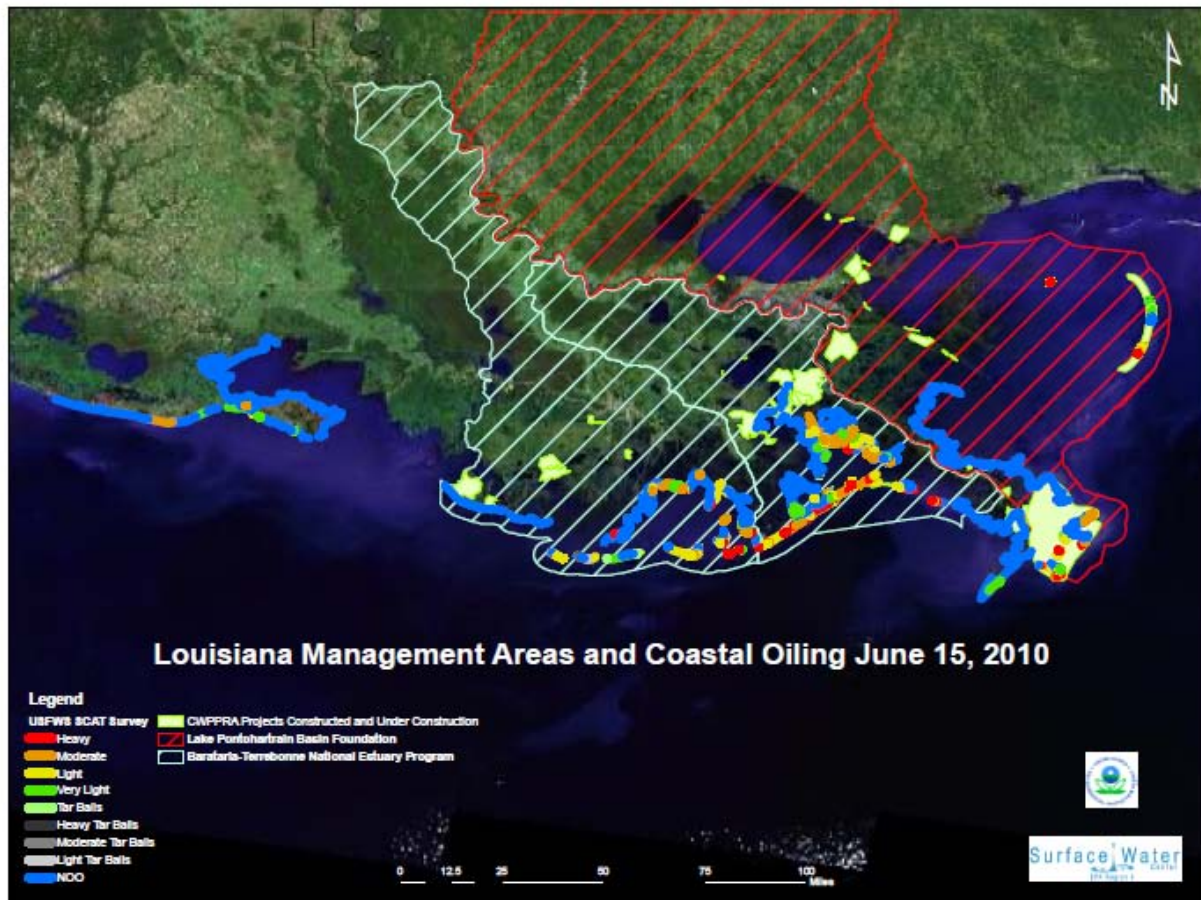


Figure 3. Oil impact assessment map including Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary Program, Lake Ponchartrain Basin Foundation boundaries, constructed CWPPRA projects and reported oiled shorelines.

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Shoreline Impact Area	Stage	Parish	Progress	Miles Impact
Southpass Inner Sandbar	Venice	Plaquemines	re-oiling; ongoing	2.78
Pilot Bayou/Johnson Pass	Venice	Plaquemines	using containment boom	1.5
Pass a L'outre/Red Fish Bay	Venice	Plaquemines	70%	4
Inner Area Southpass	Venice	Plaquemines	tbd	1.49
Chandeleur Island	Hopedale	St. Bernard	100%	7.2
Grand Isle/Elmer's Island	Grand Isle	Jefferson	re-oiling; ongoing	7.6
Isle Grande Terre	Grand Isle	Plaquemines	tbd	1.77
Brush Island	Hopedale	St. Bernard	100%	1.33
Lake Raccourci	Fourchon	LaFourche	tbd	0.8
Chenier Au Tigre	St. Mary	Vermillion	100%	0.7
Trinity Island	Cocodrie	Terrabone	100%	0.48
Fourchon Beach	Fourchon	LaFourche	tbd	3.75
Timbalier Bay	Fourchon	LaFourche	tbd	0.43
Lake Felicity	Cocodrie	Terrabone	ongoing	1
Marsh Island	St. Mary	Iberia	100%	0.4
Marsh Island	St. Mary	Iberia	100%	0.2
Chenier Ronquille	Grand Isle	Plaquemines	tbd	0.2485
Spartina Marsh	Grand Isle	Jefferson	tbd	0.2

Table 1. Deepwater Horizon shoreline impacts and status of cleanup. Information provided by EPA On Scene Coordinator web page. Created 6/14/10.